

Sobbing Daniel Holtzclaw Appears to Mouth 'How Could You Do This' at All-White Jury That Convicted Him

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2015 Cops rape prostitutes drugs addicts Daniel Holtzclaw

In the trial of serial rapist ex-cop Daniel Holtzclaw—a man who took an extraordinarily evil bet on America's disenfranchisement of poor black women, to the point of regularly pulling them over and raping them on the street—some took note of the fact that he was facing an all-white jury and had an attorney who suggested his victims had an “agenda,” and concluded that we might as well prepare for the worst.

Then, last night, after over 45 hours of jury deliberations, the judge read the Holtzclaw announcement on a live stream: 18 out of 36 counts of sexual assault is better than what I expected, if fewer than what that piece of shit deserved.



Ex-Cop Daniel Holtzclaw Found Guilty on 18 of 36 Charges of Raping, Assaulting 13 Women

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A verdict like that is a signal. In a recent investigation, the AP identified over 1,000 police officers in America who'd lost their badges over a six-year period for rape, sodomy and assault. Holtzclaw is just one of these officers. He remained on the force for months after his first accusation, from a woman who he'd misjudged as the type who'd be too afraid to talk.

His verdict is a triumph for poor women with criminal records who, until now, might have fundamentally and truly expected that if a cop raped them, they wouldn't be believed. I expected the verdict itself to be the most difficult thing to swallow last night; instead, the sight of him sobbing, convicted of half his alleged crimes, shaking like a child who'd been betrayed by his assumed protectors, will never scrub out of my mind.

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From the testimony of his 17-year-old victim, at BuzzFeed:

They were on A.'s mom's porch when Holtzclaw allegedly told her he had to search her. He allegedly groped her underneath her clothes and inserted his fingers into her genitalia.

I was in shock. I was thinking like 'What's going on? Why would he be doing this?' He said, 'You got warrants. I don't want to have to take you to jail. I don't want to make this any harder than it has to be.' Something like that. I don't remember exactly.

I was in trouble. Like this was bad.

'This is what you're going to have to do.' That's what he said.

She testified that Holtzclaw then exposed his penis through his fly and raped her.

I told him I didn't even want to do it before he pulled my drawers down, but it was too late.

Afterward Holtzclaw allegedly told A., "I might be back to see you later."

Holtzclaw, whose charges included first-degree rape, second-degree rape, sexual battery, stalking, burglary, indecent exposure, and forcible oral sodomy, did this many, many, many more times.

When he was first arrested, in August of 2014, Holtzclaw "vehemently denied" every charge. His sister started selling "Free the Claw" T-shirts. His family issued a statement saying that the victims were presenting "solicited testimony by the police department of felons, prostitutes and others who would have personal motives beyond the basic truth to fabricate their stories." When DNA that did not belong to his girlfriend was found inside his zipper, Holtzclaw's attorney said:

"It could be as simple as someone at the cleaners grabbing his pants and transferring the skin cells," he told KOCO. "None of what the detectives said surprised me. They can make anything look sinister, and that's what they attempt to do."

These responses strongly suggested a sense made exceedingly real by his blubbering face last night: Daniel Holtzclaw is a man who sees being caught as a betrayal of justice. (The asymmetry between this and the betrayal of justice with which he broke open those women is essentially too much to bear.) Holtzclaw, who is half white and half Japanese, was a man who truly trusted that the systematic anti-black racism of the American criminal justice system was so strong that it would protect him. He was a cop; he had the ability to do this, and it seemed to him like a right.

Witness him silently ask the jury how they could do this—or, by another reading, say despite everything that "he didn't do this"—and it's impossible not to be reminded of the fact that, if just a few things were different, Holtzclaw's blind, childish, sociopathic trust in the system might have been exactly right.